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BOBBY L. RUSH
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
1ST DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

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May 26, 2009

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The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20460-0002

Dear Administrator Jackson:

I would like to thank you for commencing the federal investigation by your agency into the drinking water contamination issue in the Village of Crestwood, Illinois. I applaud your prompt attention and leadership on this matter, and I look forward to working with you throughout this process as we learn more on who is responsible, and how we can prevent residents in the future from being exposed to harmful levels of contaminated drinking water.

I would also like to thank your agency for participating in a recent community forum held in my congressional district on May 9, 2009, in which US EPA officials from Region V presented information to local residents and answered questions regarding the US EPA's role on the relevant issues. After hearing from these and other presentations from the Illinois EPA and Centers for Disease Control Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), attendees and participants were able to learn more about the Safe Drinking Water Act (P.L. 93-523), as well as other federal laws and regulations that pertain to drinking water standards and requirements.

As a follow up to the information presented, I am requesting that your agency conduct a formal review of the applicable water standards that were discussed. This would include standards for trichloroethylene (TCE), perchloroethylene (PCE), and vinyl chloride, among others. I am particularly requesting a review of how these standards may need amending considering the varying impact upon vulnerable populations such as infants, adolescents, and pregnant mothers among other groups.

I would like to meet with you and relevant staff to discuss these standards, and any possible improvements that can be made. Additionally, I would like to discuss certain other aspects of the Safe Drinking Water Act, such as reporting and communication requirements, which may provide a vehicle in preventing another catastrophe such as Crestwood from occurring again.

For any questions or concerns on this matter, please contact my Legislative Director, Christopher Brown, at (202) 225-4372 or by email at cmbrown@mail.house.gov.

I thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and I look forward to meeting and discussing these extremely important issues with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby Rush", written in a cursive style.

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman,
Chairman – U.S. House Committee on Energy & Commerce

The Honorable Edward A. Markey,
Chairman – Subcommittee on Energy & Environment,
Committee on Energy & Commerce